DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 112 459 EA 007 493

AUTHOR Rosen, David J.; Mulcahy, Gene
TITLE Evaluation -- Shanti: A Case Study.
INSTITUTION Indiana Univ., Bloomington. School of Education.; International Consortium for Options in Public Education, Bloomington, Ind.
PUB DATE 75
NOTE 15p.
AVAILABLE FROM Changing Schools, School of Education, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana 47401 ($1.00)
JOURNAL CIT Changing Schools: An Occasional Newsletter on Alternative Public Schools; v4:2 p.14 1975

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS *Alternative Schools; *Case Studies (Education); *Educational Alternatives; Educational Objectives; Educational Philosophy; Elementary Secondary Education; *Evaluation Methods; Models; *Program Evaluation

ABSTRACT

This newsletter comprises four sections: (1) the educational philosophy and objectives of Shanti, a public alternative school in Hartford, Connecticut; (2) Rosen's statements about the difficulties of finding an evaluation model for alternative schools and the implications of the methodology that he later used in evaluating the Shanti school in his doctoral dissertation; (3) comments by Mulcahy, director of the school, about Rosen's evaluation and evaluations in general; and (4) Rosen's response to Mulcahy. (MLF)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED112459

changing schools

An Occasional Newsletter on Alternative Public Schools

4:2, 1975 No. 14

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

EVALUATION
SHANTI: A CASE STUDY

Shanti School: Philosophy and Objectives

The Shanti Evaluation: A Study of a New Evaluation Methodology for Public Alternative Schools
by David J. Rosen

The Shanti Evaluation: Even Wilbur and Orville Couldn't Make It Fly
by Gene Mulcahy

Rosen's Response to Mulcahy

LAST CHANCE TO REGISTER FOR THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON OPTIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(See Back Page of This Issue)

EA 007 493

Options in Public Education

SHANTI SCHOOL: PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

(As approved by Shanti School Board on 24 May 1973 and by Shanti School community on 1 June 1973)

Shanti is a dynamic learning community. We equate humanness with individuality in community, with considering carefully all options, then deciding and standing courageously and firmly by what we know we believe. We believe it is courageous to challenge and rechallenge our assumptions, to admit and welcome growth and change, even when we must correct our error. To choose is to be free.

Shanti exists to provide for young people a framework within which they can engage in the process of self-definition, a process essentially dependent on the free decisions of each individual. Such a framework obliges students to call upon their own resources: whatever means they choose to utilize this open learning environment will be unique manifestations of their individual selves.

At Shanti we seek to learn the hard skills of survival for further learning and future effort. We learn them through choice, through following our own inclinations and enthusiasms to their natural ends or, if faltering, to change direction and change again if need be. We accept fully and personally the responsibility for our choices and our freedom.

The most obvious context in which we are engaged in this process of making choices is the curriculum. The Shanti curriculum is built of opportunities to learn: it is a vehicle for us to increase knowledge through commitment and action, to convert possibility into reality, to convert the people we wanted to be into the people we are. It allows students to pursue academic, vocational and intellectual efforts for their own sakes. This curriculum is developed, on the one hand, in response to identifiable student needs and interests or in anticipation of needs and interests based on prior experience. On the other hand, many curricular offerings arise out of staff interests, concerns and abilities.

We use the full resources of the Greater Hartford community as our learning tools because learning is everywhere, everything. In turn, we are committed to serve that community whenever and wherever we can. The community provides us with the substance of our learning; the energy and direction of that learning are our own.

We are a community. We recognize the right of the individual to establish his or her own place in that community. We are self-governed. We are composed of students and staff from different races and cultures. Staff and students are equal members. By virtue of greater experience, staff assumes some special community responsibilities. This frequently applies to areas of safety and survival. The staff should make clear to students options, opportunities, information: choice is the student's own.

We seek through model and action to change the world in which we live and the schools that support that world, for no person can be free when another is

(Shanti School: Philosophy and Objectives Continued)

oppressed. The path to freedom for our sisters, our brothers and ourselves is through our own self-disciplined growth and sharing in the commitment to struggle toward a world of greater freedom, knowledge and love.

The Shanti School community believes that it is important to:

- -convert knowledge to commitment and action, and increase knowledge through commitment and action;
- -relate and connect studies and actions with the realities of living, with emphasis on urban exploration;
- -acquire skills in cooperation, problem solving and long range planning;
- -take advantage of opportunities for multicultural, multiracial experiences;
- -acquire the basic academic skills which are essential for taking control of one's own life, preparing for jobs and for further education;
- -meet the unique needs of individual students;
- -operate a viable alternative model to traditional high schools;
- -educate the community regarding alternative educational techniques;
- -involve parents in the educative process, both as teachers and as learners;
- -provide students with the opportunity to engage in real self-government;
- -engage in continuing self-evaluation; and
- -actively and aggressively seek to fundamentally restructure public education. To the extent that the education system reflects society's values, we recognize and affirm that we are also committed to the fundamental restructuring of our society.

Thus, we have structured our school so as to provide members of our community with opportunities to do these things.

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND THE SECOND CONVENTION OF THE

INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM FOR OPTIONS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

OCTOBER 1-4, 1975 PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

- *students, parents, and teachers from 20 selected optional public schools sharing their experiences*
- *leaders in alternative education speaking and interacting*
- *clinics, seminars, workshops, general sessions, informal discussions and "rap time"*
- *materials exchange center, alternative school tours, pre-convention workshops, entertainment, and exhibits*

SEE THE REGISTRATION FORM ON THE BACK PAGE OF THIS ISSUE

THE SHANTI EVALUATION: A STUDY OF A NEW EVALUATION METHODOLOGY FOR PUBLIC ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS

David J. Rosen

Alternative public schools are for the most part new schools. They have grown up in a time when traditional schools have not well-served the needs of all the youngsters who attend them. So far, they have in common that they are born out of frustration with existing public schools, and that they struggle to create significantly different learning communities.

Beyond these characteristics, it is difficult to generalize about all alternative schools. The concept of alternative schools (rather than an alternative school) suggests that there are, or that there ought to be many different kinds of schools within the same school system, many different options for young people and parents to choose from. Consequently, one would expect to observe not only important differences between an alternative school and a traditional public school, but also important differences among alternatives.

This makes the evaluation of alternative schools an especially difficult task. No standard set of criteria will adequately do the job. No criteria developed for one alternative school will necessarily be useful to another. And yet the evaluation of alternative schools is already a crucial issue in their survival. Partly for political reasons, partly because federal and state grants are accompanied by the demand for evaluation, and partly from a genuine and widespread interest to know what alternatives are doing well and not doing well, studies and evaluations of alternative schools can soon be expected to be commonplace.

It is hardly necessary to make a case to an alternative school audience for evaluation. Almost any alternative school which has survived its first year will acknowledge the need for and the usefulness of data which will help in making decisions to improve the school. This is especially true at the student, course, and staff evaluation levels, where data on student progress toward accomplishing student-defined learning goals, on the extent to which courses, independent studies, internships, and other learning resources are meeting the needs and goals of students, and on the extent to which individual staff members are meeting student and school needs, is extremely useful. At the program or school level, too, evaluation is welcome, especially if it can produce useful data for improving the school; however, some evaluation practices and styles, and some models for evaluation, are clearly seen by alternative schools as antithetical to their goals, styles, and values.

There seems to be no problem in convincing alternative schools of the value of looking carefully at what they are doing and how well they are accomplishing their goals. Rather, the problem is to find, develop, or adapt models which will enable achievable, useful, and worthwhile program evaluation to be done. There is especially a need for evaluation which will enlighten and inform, but which will not dictate or control, evaluation which will not take decision-making authority away from student, parents, and staff and give it to external decision-makers or to an

evaluator, and evaluation which will not in other ways interrupt or interfere with the school's accomplishment of its goals and functions.

The task of finding an evaluation model with the characteristics I have described is not an easy one. A recent survey for the Educational Research Information Center Clearinghouse on Adult Education by Dr. Sara M. Steele summarizes over fifty different current program evaluation models. Although it offers the bewildered evaluation consumer a helpful index based on specific kinds of problems and needs which these models might be able to address, and although each model is described in terms of what it attempts to accomplish, with careful study it becomes clear to the user that the differences in these models are more than technical, that they try to accomplish quite different sorts of purposes, and that their creators have in mind very different concepts of evaluation. Ms. Steele makes this problem quite clear in her introduction.

> "...the late 1960's brought an influx of new programs and new demands for evaluation. Established concepts didn't deliver. As a result, new ideas about evaluation emerged and new frameworks appeared. There's considerable divergence in those ideas. Most of them are still in the trial and testing stage. Many paths are being taken off the plateau of the earlier period, but few of these parths are widely accepted. None can be considered the main route....new definitions of evaluation are evolving."[1]

Some widely-held definitions of evaluation assume that its primary purpose is to judge the worth, desirability, or adequacy of an enterprise, that is, to make value judgments about it. Some assume that the purpose is to answer questions about an enterprise, that is, to do either basic or applied research. Still others assume that its main purpose is to provide information to decision-makers to help improve the enterprise being evaluated.

Furthermore, many of these models assume that evaluation is to be undertaken by an outside expert, a person who is thought to have special skills, "objectivity," and sometimes even "better judgment." With such a difference in purposes and styles, and so little information on the effectiveness of this plethora of models, it is not surprising that a would-be consumer of evaluation would be confused, wary, and uneasy.

It was with an understanding of this problem and a concern for alternative schools that would undertake or submit to program evaluation without even superficial knowledge of existing models, and without clear understanding of their reasons for evaluating themselves, that I first undertook preliminary exploration of current models and methodologies for evaluation, and later focused upon one methodology which I felt had potential for alternative schools.

---

[1]Steele, Sara M., Contemporary Approaches to Program Evaluation: Implications for Evaluating Programs for Disadvantaged Adults. ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult Education. Education Resources Division, Capitol Publications, Inc. Washington, D.C. May, 1973.

In the spring of 1973, in an article in the Special Evaluation Issue of Changing Schools I presented 1) the purpose of this evaluation methodology--to provide data to decision-makers for enlightened decision-making about an enterprise, 2) the implications of that purpose, and 3) features of the methodology which embody those implications. Some of those implications are as follows:

1. If data are actually to be used for decision-making, then those who will use the data, the decision-makers, must be identified well before data are collected for them.

2. If data are to be used by the decision-makers, they should be collected on goals which the decision-makers actually have.

3. If goals are to be measured or observed, they must be described in observable or measurable terms. It is essential, at the same time, that the decision-maker's meaning for a goal is not lost, and that meanings that were not part of that goal for that decision-maker not be added unless this is desired by the decision-maker.

4. If data are actually to be used for decision-making, the decision-maker must feel that the data collected are valid. Goals must be measured in appropriate parts of the enterprise from the decision-maker's point of view, and observational techniques must be valid from the decision-maker's perspective.

5. When data are reported to a decision-maker they must be reported in terms of the decision-maker's goals, and in a convenient form which makes sense to him/her.

6. Since the evaluation may be considered by decision-makers as a part of the enterprise, they may want data for decision-making on the evaluation.

At the conclusion of that article I argued that decision-oriented (or applied) research needed to be done:

1. to determine what the needs of alternative schools really are for evaluation,

2. to field-test (or field-trial) this particular evaluation methodology, and

3. to investigate how well this methodology compares with evaluation models, particularly in their applicability to both macro- and micro-level decision-makers, in the efficiency, focus, and completeness of data provided, and in the degree of interference with the enterprise's accomplishment of its goals.

From September, 1973, to May, 1974 I studied this methodology as it was being used to evaluate Shanti, a public alternative school in Hartford, Connecticut. The broad purpose of this decision-oriented research was to generate data for

decision-making both about the methodology itself and about its use in an alternative school setting. Some of the specific purposes were:

1. to field-test some of the sections of the methodology which had not been previously formally field-tested,

2. to do methodological development work on a part of the methodology for which gaps had been identified as a result of a previous study, and then to field-test this redesigned part,

3. to examine the feasibility of using the methodology in a public alternative school setting,

4. to examine whether or not there would be sufficient cooperation from decision-makers to complete all parts of the methodology,

5. to examine whether or not the methodology could accomplish its purpose--to provide data for decision-making--in a public alternative school setting, and

6. to examine whether or not the evaluation methodology would interfere with the accomplishment of the school's goals.

At the end of April, 1974, as part of the evaluation of Shanti, and as part of the study of the methodology, an evaluation of the evaluation was performed. Much of the data on the effectiveness and suitability of the evaluation methodology was gathered at this time. As the results of this study may be relevant to alternative schools, I would like to describe them here in a general way, and to raise some questions and issues of concern for alternative schools people to consider.

On the whole the detailed results of the field-tests show that all the parts of the methodology which were field-tested as part of this study were able to accomplish their purposes. In some, minor gaps were identified, and methodological development was done on these parts. The redesigned steps were field-tested and found to be successful.

It was generally agreed by decision-makers and by the evaluator that it is feasible to use the methodology to evaluate a public alternative school if by "feasible" it is meant that it is possible, that it can be done. This was not, however, a judgement about the usefulness or suitability of the methodology for alternative schools.

It was clear that the methodology was able to accomplish its purpose--to provide data for decision-making--in an alternative school setting, although to different degrees of success for different decision-makers, but not to the complete satisfaction of any decision-maker.

Decision-maker cooperation, while generally quite high, was in some cases not sufficient to complete all parts of the methodology, and in most cases not sustained at the same high level throughout all parts of the methodology. It flagged noticeably during the operationalization process.

It was generally felt that the methodology did not interfere with the accomplishment of the school's goals except--and this was felt by several decision-makers to be significant--in its use of human resources that might have been spent directly on achieving the school's goals.

It is difficult to sum up the results of this study as a simple yes/no answer as to the success or failure of the Shanti evaluation using this methodology. As alternative schools need to have a variety of information to help them in their choice of an appropriate evaluation model, I would nevertheless like to make clear my thoughts about the use of this methodology for evaluating public alternative schools. The Fortune/Hutchinson Evaluation Methodology is a work in progress, a model which, once it is fully developed and tested, may be useful to alternative schools and other enterprises that want data for their decision-making to improve what they are doing. In its current state of development it has much that is directly useful to alternative schools, and it also has some problems. Most of these problems are addressed in the recommendations which are a part of this study.[2] If these are solved, this methodology has great potential for the evaluation of alternative schools.

More broadly, this research raises some questions and leads to some concerns which need to be addressed both by researchers and by alternatives as they consider doing evaluation.

1. Alternative schools, individually and collectively, do not clearly understand their purposes for undertaking program evaluation.

2. Alternative schools do not know what evaluation models are available, nor do they have enough pertinent information on the models they do know about.

3. Consequently, they are not aware of their choices, and do not make wise decisions about contracting for evaluation or monitoring its progress.

4. There has been almost no hard research on evaluation models, and no data on their feasibility, effectiveness, or appropriateness for different evaluation situations. This makes choice more difficult for alternative schools.

The following questions are particularly important for alternative schools to seriously consider:

1. For what purpose(s) should evaluation of an alternative school be undertaken? What purposes are worthwhile for alternative schools and what purposes are not worthwhile?

---

[2]Rosen, David J., The Shanti Evaluation: A Study of the Fortune/Hutchinson Evaluation Methodology in a Public Alternative School. Unpublished dissertation. University of Massachusetts, May 1974.

2. Who should have the right to initiate evaluation of alternative schools, to choose the model, and to choose the evaluator(s)? If the alternative school is not included in this decision, on what grounds can/should it refuse to participate in evaluation.

3. What should be the relationship between outside evaluation, contracted for a limited time, and ongoing evaluation processes in the school? How can outside evaluation be of lasting use to the school's regular evaluation processes?

4. When should evaluation be done? Should it begin with planning and continue throughout the life of the school, or should it be done on a one-shot basis, or periodically?

5. Who should monitor the progress of the evaluation? Who should have the right to terminate it if it is not useful to the school?

6. How can an evaluation enhance the accomplishment of other school goals? Can it and still be objective? Should it?

Hopefully the concerns and questions raised here will stimulate alternative schools to think carefully about the kind of program evaluation they undertake, and will move those who would offer their research skills to alternative schools to create, adapt, and study models for evaluation which are useful and worthwhile for a variety of alternative school settings.

References

Benedict, ed. The Fortune/Hutchinson Evaluation Methodology, Version I, Draft I. Compiled by Larry G. Benedict, School of Education Center for Educational Research, University of Massachusetts, September, 1973.

Benedict, L.G. A Practical Guide for Evaluation. Capitol Region Education Council, Windsor, Connecticut. 1974.

Rosen, D. J., "New Evaluation for New Schools," in Changing Schools, Special Issue: Evaluation for Alternative Schools. Published by the Educational Alternatives Project, Indiana University. Bloomington, Indiana. May, 1973.

The evaluation of alternative schools continues to be a hot topic. We felt that Changing School readers would enjoy this exchange between David Rosen and Gene Mulcahy on the Santi evaluation.

The Editors: Vernon H. Smith, Robert D. Barr, Daniel J. Burke

A few back issues of *Changing Schools* #7 through 13 are still available at $1 each. A 1975 Directory listing names and addresses of over 1,200 alternative public schools in operation in 1974-75 is available for $2 per copy.

THE SHANTI EVALUATION:
EVEN WILBUR AND ORVILLE COULDN'T MAKE IT FLY

Gene Mulcahy, Director
Shanti School

David Rosen expresses difficulty summing up the results of his study, and determining whether the Shanti evaluation was a success or failure. I have no such difficulty. For Shanti, it was a disaster.

If its primary goal was to return data to decision makers for decision making, the evidence says it did not. The data provided was not in most cases used for decision making, was old before it was presented, and bore no reasonable relationship to the human resources consumed by Shanti students, staff or by Rosen.

Rosen misquotes our decision makers when he says: "It was generally argued by decision makers and by the evaluator that it is feasible to use the methodology to evaluate a public alternative school if by "feasible" it is meant that it is possible, that it can be done."

What in fact was said by the decision makers was that the methodology is possible "in the sense that anything is possible." The implication was "possible but not desirable." The question is what does feasible mean to the decision makers. It means possible - yes - desirable in the form we experienced - no.

Evaluation is a vital element in the care and nurture of alternative schools. Despite the differences among our schools, it can in general be said that the schools differ from the traditional schools in whose shadow they often operate and to whom they will inevitably be compared. When the alternative school folks understand this, then they can take control of the evaluation and comparison and choose an appropriate methodology and time. When alternative school folks do not understand the various roles of evaluation, evaluation occurs any way, but when unplanned and not designed, others control the choice of methodology and the design of the evaluation. Frequently, the evaluation is non systemic. What school board members hear constituents say in super markets - for example - What parents hear on the bus or in the carpool, etc. This non systemic evaluation often has little validity, has no controls and can be disastrous.

The alternative school should take the initiative in evaluation and thereby control the process. The process should meet the approval of other concerned parties. Once the initiative is seized, the question must be faced: What are the purposes of our having an evaluation? Three frequent reasons are: 1. To find out if we're doing what we think we're doing or what to be doing. 2. To prove to somebody else that we're doing what they think we're doing or should be doing. 3. To find out what somebody who knows more than we do (we hope) thinks.

These goals for having an evaluation may not be compatible in a given situation. For example, an evaluation which demonstrates in the final analysis that you are messing up royally may be a highly successful and

useful evaluation, but could be hazardous to your survival. Or you may have an evaluation which makes your benefactors smile and pat warmly but doesn't tell you a bloody thing you need to know.

So, you need to be very clear about why you're seeking an evaluation and be wary of designs which promise to achieve all your goals for having the bloody experience to begin with. I concur enthusiastically with Rosen's four point analysis of the problems alternative schools face when considering an evaluation. There is a great need for a handbook in lay person's terms outlining the options for alternative school evaluation for the benefit of the schools themselves. With all the dedicated research and evaluation folks scurrying about after doctorates, I plead that one may see fit to develop an up-to-date down-to-earth summary of the options - their strengths, weaknesses, and costs in money and people.

On the other hand, I, as a consumer, am not sympathetic to evaluator breast beating, bitching and moaning about the imperfectability of their methodologies and instrumentation. Evaluators are too often hypnotized by their own mystical jargon and quixotic vision. School needs are practical needs, needs to know, and evaluation folks have the sublime arrogance to tell me or to facilitate my telling myself. If they are willing to address that formidable task, I commend and thank them. If they spend their energies refining their own sense of perfection, I encourage them not to involve me and my school in that deliberation. I found in the case in point, that the two were not compatible. The evaluators' position seems to me analagous to that of the intellectual literary critics of the nineteenth century who labored to discover who other than Shakespeare wrote his plays. Their irrelevant quest for them made the knowing, feeling, and interpreting the plays impossible.

Rosen tells me that the Shanti evaluation has had a major and important influence upon the development of methodology. In some humane and tertiary way, I take joy at this achievement, but my recollection of the hours of our energy and sincere effort and the miniscule return, mitigates my joy and makes me sad that such time and effort was so spent when so many important things were left undone. Our resources and Rosen's own remarkable abilities could better have been used.

As a starter for the layperson's guide to alternate school evaluation, let me share my thoughts on the Fortune-Hutchinson Model as experienced at Shanti School. Strengths: careful and articulated goals process, high level emphasis of control of data by decision maker on data for decision makers, very thorough; those who participate learn a valuable lifelong process of reasoning and evaluating- year long - evaluation of the evaluation. Weaknesses: long suffering and time consuming, long delay in operationalizing, long delay in data return, too time consuming, inflexible, requires constant resources of time and effort, too conscious of itself as a methodology at the exclusion of emphasis on the evaluation of a school.

Indeed my judgments are non systemic themselves, are subjective and subject to the disagreement of those who identify themselves as expert. They are the judgments of an experienced practitioner intended as guidance

to other practitioners. This same experience leads me to render another chunk of advice - Behold - Gene Mulcahy's checklist on not getting ripped off by evaluators.

1. Be sure you have your own goals for having an evaluation clear. Get out all the hidden goals.

2. Investigate all the possibilities. There is more than one game in town. There are new Rolls Royce methodologies and off the curb fly-by-night used Ford ones. Get all the information you can. Check out the alternative school clearing houses. The consortium at Indiana University, the National Alternative School Program at the University of Massachusetts and the Center for New Schools in Chicago are all experienced groups.

3. Be sure that the evaluator's primary goal is to evaluate you - not to prove a point, defend a position, or get a degree. These may be secondary concerns - your primary concern is the evaluation. Make sure the other party concurs.

4. Ask to see previous work. Get an idea of what a previous product looked like. What will the differences be?

5. Check out references. Are those previously served by this person or group pleased? Be thorough. If it's a first run, see what's comparable and check that out.

6. Consult as far as possible everyone who has any relationship to your school and program. What do they think about the options? About your leanings? What are they willing to contribute?

7. Make a decision in favor of one method and/or contractor contingent on a favorable contract.

8. Negotiating the contract-
   a. Make clear the goals of the evaluation.
   b. Define as exactly as possible the resources the school is offering; those the contractor is offering. Be very sure you mean it. Think of those outrageous days and weeks of work and ask - Can I give this even then?
   c. Establish time lines. Determine when each part of the evaluation will be completed. When you will get what data.
   d. Establish legal checks and general accountabilities.
   e. Check the contract out with all those who had defined input.
   f. Establish check points to determine if the stated goals are being met.
   g. Design an inflight correction system - to adjust the contract along the way to changing needs.
   h. Provide for an evaluation of the evaluation.

9. Hold clear and high expectations of the evaluation. Don't get talked into or out of things.

10. Don't get overwhelmed - either by the work or the peculiar jargon

evaluators have invented. If you don't understand, ask and ask further. The problem isn't that you're stupid, but that they're not communicating effectively or don't understand their own business very well.

11. Do the above in a spirit of cooperation and good will but don't exclude steps for these reasons.

In the past several years Shanti has been victim to numbers of evaluations - Some highly formal and long range - like Rosen's and the accredidation evaluations - some much less formal, for specific purposes. I have also performed evaluations. I ardently hope that my efforts as evaluator have been of greater value than my efforts as evaluatee. Little of the effort we have in four years, invested in external evaluation, has been worth the time and energy invested. Our own non-professional internal systems are highly efficient, speedy, and less effort. I am in the process of preparing some written material on these methods as they continue to serve our needs at Shanti School.

ROSEN'S RESPONSE TO MULCAHY

Gene Mulcahy and I disagree about the Shanti Evaluation's value to Shanti. His perception of the evaluation and its success or failure is understandably colored by his personal experience as an (evaluation) decision-maker, which was almost completely unsatisfactory. Not all decision-makers at Shanti, however, had his experience. Data were collected for several decision-makers and the data were used for making decisions about Shanti.

Mulcahy is right when he says that a great deal of Shanti students' and staff members' time, as well as my own, was consumed for relatively little data. Unless the methodology, or more precisely the use of the methodology, is changed to prevent this problem, it will not serve alternative schools. I wholeheartedly agree with Mulcahy's advice that alternative schools take the initiative in evaluation, be clear about their purposes for an evaluation, choose (or approve of) the evaluation model, and control the process. His eleven point checklist is good advice. The Shanti evaluation would undoubtedly have been of greater value if Shanti's evaluation task force, the contractor for and monitor of the evaluation, had had such advice.

(Reviews Continued from Page 15)

In the last chapter "Optional Public Schools: The Potential," he makes what I regard as an irresistible case for the growth of the alternative public school movement, in dramatic human terms.

If we needed another example, and I think we did, of the fact that important ideas and information can be presented pungently and briefly, Vern Smith has provided it in this book. Buy a copy not only for yourself, but for every member of your local school board, and have them schedule a discussion of it as an agenda item at the earliest possible time.

SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON

OPTIONS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

OCTOBER 1-4, 1975 ... PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

REGISTER NOW AND SAVE

Pre-registration	On-Site Registration
$20.00 per person	$25.00 per person
$7.50 per full-time student	$12.50 per full-time student

Return This Registration Form

ICOPE REGISTRATION*

Name _____

Position _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

☐ $20.00 per person

☐ $7.50 per full-time student

*Must be received by Sept. 20

Mail this form with check or money order payable to ICOPE

ICOPE Convention
School of Education 339
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

Published by the Center for Options in Public Education, Indiana University, in cooperation with the International Consortium for Options in Public Education.

hanging Schools
chool of Education
diana University
oomington, Indiana 47401

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 2
Bloomington, Indiana 47401

Mrs. Clarice H. Watson
Acquisitions Librarian
ERIC Clearinghouse of Educational Management
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon 97403